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Thesis

THE CATECHISM AS CURRICULUM MATERIAL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

by

Lulu Elizabeth Pontious

(A.B., Baldwin-Wallace College, 1927)

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1934

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INTRODUCTION

1. BRIEF HISTORICAL RESUME OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF CATECHETICAL MATERIAL.

In the early Christian Church the system of imparting instruction in the Christian religion was known as the catechetical method. Questions and answers made up its method of teaching and the material used was published in the form of a catechism. Religious teaching of this nature is as old as the church, and has descended through every period of her history even going as far back as the time of Moses. He foresaw that the children would ask, "What mean the testimonies, and the statues, and the judgments of the Lord," and he commanded that their parents teach them.(1) This instruction we also find common among the Jews. At the early age of twelve years Jesus was found in the temple among the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions. In the early Jewish synagogue the teacher sat on a raised platform at one end of the room, and the children cross-legged on the floor before him. In a monotonous tone of voice he repeated a verse from the Scriptures and the children shouted it after him. Then, too, the Laws from the Great Scroll were read by the teacher and memorized by the pupil. Besides the Scriptures

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(1) Deuteronomy 6:20

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(1) Deuteronomy 6:20

and its interpretation, there were countless rules for governing their conduct on the Sabbath and at the Festival time. A little improvement over the synagogue school was found in the primitive church when there began to be a little variation in the course of study. Unless a separate building was provided the school was held in the baptistry or vestry of the church. Sacred biography, sacred history, Jewish customs, memorizing of Scripture passages and the Biblical doctrines, God, sin, grace, prayer, regeneration, resurrection, and the like, were the subjects taught. The chief textbooks were the Bible, dialogues, Jewish history, and religious poetry. Advanced schools which flourished until about the fifth century were established in Alexandria for the intellectual and educated. During the sixth to fifteenth centuries inclusive, catechetical instruction received very little attention from the church leaders. Love for classical literature became so strong that the church forgot its mission and moved with the tide. However, there were a few leaders during that time who did not forget the spirit of their Great Founder and carried on the task of religious instruction for children. In the eleventh century Burno of Wurtzburg prepared a catechism on the general plan of catechisms with questions and answers both attached. The Councils of Lambeth in 1281, Bezier in 1346, and Fortosa in 1429, ordered bishops to see to it that religious instruction in the truths of the Christian religion and church doctrines be imparted to the children and youth.

2. THE EFFECT OF THE REFORMATION ON CATECHETICAL MATERIAL.

At the time of the reformation a flood of catechisms poured out on the Protestant world. Each branch of the Protestant Church had its own method of giving special attention to its particular principles of belief. The clergy were ruled by the scholastic spirit and turned their attention to refuting the heresies and falsities of the teachings of the Roman Church. Doctrine became the one great subject of sermon, discussion, article, book and instruction. Some of those published in this period were Luther's in 1529, and Calvin's in 1536, which were both used in the Reformed Churches throughout Switzerland, France, and the Netherlands. More important than the work of Calvin was that of Caspar Alevianus and Zacharias Ursinus, published in the form of the Heidelberg Catechism, which later became the standard of most of the Reformed Churches of Central Europe, and later the Reformed Churches of America. The doctrines and duties of the Presbyterian Church are found in the Westminster Catechism both larger and smaller and published about 1648. The first Anglican Catechism made its appearance in the Book of Common Prayer, and was written, it is thought, by Thomas Cranmer and Nicholas Ridley. Later at the suggestion of James I, who thought the catechism too brief, Rev. Dr. John Overall lengthened it by adding an explanation of the two sacraments.(1) In its complete form it contained the first

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(1) The Sunday School Teacher's Manual by Rev. William M. Groton--p. 151

Baptismal covenant, Apostolic Creed, Decalogue, Lord's Prayer, Sacraments of Baptism, and Lord's Supper. This catechism is in use today wherever we find an Anglican or Episcopal Church established.

Then there were the Catechisms of Watts, used in Congregational Churches, and Wesley in the Methodist Churches, both of which reflect an interest in children and an effort to simplify theological dogma.

3. THE USE OF THE CATECHISM IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL CURRICULUM.

Naturally when Sunday Schools were first thought of as the teaching agency of the church and as separate from all secular teaching, they turned to the catechetical material already accessible. If all pagan influences were to be combated successfully there must be definite convictions in respect to the doctrines of Christian truths. To be well versed in the doctrines of the church was considered much more important than merely doing kindly acts and living virtuous lives. It is easy for us to understand why the catechism was used even more widely than the Bible. It was much easier for the teacher to assign a lesson in the catechism for it was much more systematic than the Bible. That is, it had been prepared for classroom use while the Bible had not. Since preparation for service in the church seemed to be the chief aim for all education, it is not

surprising to find the catechism in the town schools of New England, the parish schools of the middle colonies, the Sunday Charity School of England, and the Philanthropic Schools of America. One of the chief ministers of the state of Massachusetts said, "The Catechism holds up a bird's-eye view of doctrines and exceeds every other book but the Bible. There is mind running through it, it overflows with mind and piety, too." (1) A correspondent of a secular newspaper said, "One of the greatest blessings to New England that God, in His wisdom and goodness, ever bestowed on a race of sinners." What numberless individuals and families thence drew their first instruction in reading, and had their minds imbued with a taste for knowledge and their hearts inspired with moral and religious principles by studying its pages.(2) In some parishes as many as from fifty to a hundred children committed the catechism accurately to memory. As a reward they were given a Testament, a Bible, or some certificate. In one of the Sabbath Schools at West Springfield the superintendent offered to give the scholar who would commit it perfectly to memory a beautiful little pocket Bible with gilt edges. There were one hundred and five scholars who committed it. This mode of instruction the people of

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(1) Fifty Years with the Sabbath Schools by A. M. Bullard--p. 76

(2) Fifty Years with the Sabbath Schools by A. M. Bullard--p. 79

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(1) Fifty Years with the Sabbath Schools by A. M. Bullard--p. 72

(2) Fifty Years with the Sabbath Schools by A. M. Bullard--p. 75

New England brought with them from the homeland. There was no uniformity or system about it, but it sprang from a conviction of an "inner light." In the early New England home children were given instruction at home through the catechism. One of the earliest catechisms used was that of John Cotton issued in 1646 and entitled "Milk for Babes Drawn out of the Breasts of Both Testaments." It was published "chiefly for the spiritual nourishment of babes in England, but may be of like use to any children." It contained sixty questions and answers, and was so widely used that it became familiar as household words in many New England homes. A century later it was made a part of the New England Primer, which continued its popularity. So great was the craze for memorizing at this time that the minds of the children must surely have been affected.

4. THE PURPOSE FOR THE STUDY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF CATECHETICAL MATERIAL.

Since the catechism was used so exclusively as curriculum material in the Sunday School for at least twenty-five years (1790-1815) and is still in existence today, let us consider a few of the outstanding ones and evaluate them. In this study we shall find many varieties of catechisms. Those with proof texts from the Bible, those with no proof texts, those with proof texts and Biblical explanations, those which added Biblical narratives, those which aim at practical emphasis

on life rather than creed, and those which have some very specific purpose.

CHAPTER II

REPRESENTATIVE CATECHETICAL MATERIAL RESULTING FROM THE REFORMATION

1. LUTHER'S SHORTER CATECHISM.

Martin Luther was the author of both a larger and smaller catechism, the larger being intended for the clergy and the smaller for those less proficient in Christian doctrine. His smaller catechism exhibits his gift of expressing the deepest things in the plainest language. It marks an epoch in the history of religious instruction for it purged it from popish superstitions and brought it back to Scriptural purity and simplicity. It was published for the benefit of the common people and the children who were most in need of such instruction. The conservative, Catholic, ecclesiastical character of Luther's Reformation is very clearly seen in his catechetical work. The conviction with which Luther wrote his smaller catechism can be understood by reading its preface.

> "Alas, what misery I beheld! The people, especially those who live in the villages, seem to have no knowledge whatever of Christian doctrine, and many of the pastors are ignorant and incompetent teachers..... They all maintain that they are Christians, that they have been baptized, and have received the Lord's Supper. Yet they

cannot even recite the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, or the Ten Commandments; they live as if they were irrational creatures, and now that the gospel has come to them, they grossly abuse their Christian liberty." (1)

There are six divisions in the Smaller Catechism:

1. The Ten Commandments
2. The Creed
3. The Lord's Prayer
4. The Sacrament of Holy Baptism
5. The Office of the Keys
6. The Sacrament of the Altar

The following is an example from the section entitled "The Office of the Keys."

The Office of the Keys

As the Head of the Family Should Teach It In All Simplicity to His Household.

What is the office of the keys? Answer:

It is the peculiar church power which Christ has given to His church on earth to forgive the sins of penitent sinners unto them, but to retain the sins of the impenitent, as long as they do not repent.

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(1) Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics--p. 254

Where is this written? Answer:

Thus writes the holy Evangelist John, Chapter twentieth: The Lord Jesus breathed on His disciples, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whosoever's sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever's sins ye retain, they are retained.(1)

His catechism is theological and doctrinal, but contains less of the "fear element" than several of the others in the period. He deserves credit for restoring Pauline theology in the church. His chief emphasis is on the authority of the word of God, as over against the authority of the church, faith of individual, insight into religious truth and experience, equality of man in the sight of God and the need of a universal education.

2. THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM.

The Heidelberg Catechism prepared by Zacharias Ursinus and Caspar Alevianus at the command of Frederick III, Elector of the Palatinate, is even more theological than Luther's, but surpasses it in its systematic presentation of Christian doctrine. It is better adapted to mature age as it unfolds upon the fundamental thought of sin, redemption and thankfulness. Max Gohil, author of an excellent history of Christian life in the Reformed Church, says, "It has Lutheran

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(1) History of the American Sunday School Curriculum by Frank Glenn Lankard--p. 81

fervor, Melanchthonian clearness, Zwinglian simplicity, and Calvinistic fire blended into one." (1)

It serves the double purpose of a guide for the religious instruction of youth and a confession of faith for the church. It is an acknowledged masterpiece as a catechism with few to equal and none to surpass it. However, it has one major defect--the answers are too long for the capacity and memory of children.

It is a book of the heart and experience, and begins with a clear and simple testimony of a pardoned soul, of the only comfort in life and death, and presents truth of salvation in the order in which children of God experience them in life.

I. The Misery of the Awakened Sinner

II. Believing Salvation in Christ

III. Thankfulness of a Redeemed Christian in Work and Prayer (2)

It was introduced in all the Reformed Churches of Germany, Holland, Hungary and Poland. Immigrants to America from these countries brought it with them, where it was recognized as a book of instruction for its youth.

Children were expected to learn the catechism by heart

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(1) Shaff--Creeds of Christendom--Vol. I

(2) Heidelberg Catechism , Central Publishing House, Cleveland, 1907

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(1) Short--Creeds of Christendom--Vol. I

(2) Heidelberg Catechism, Central Publishing House, Cleveland, 1907

and understand its doctrines. One duty of the teacher was to take the children regularly to hear preaching, particularly the ministerial instruction regarding the catechism.

Taken as a whole the catechism is free from rancor and controversy, and is spoken of as being wonderfully "sweet-spirited." (1) Example:

PART I--Question 4: What does the law of God require of us?

Answer: This Christ teaches us in sum, Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with thy mind, and with all thy strength. This is the first and greatest commandment; and the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and prophets.
(Neighbor is illustrated by Good Samaritan Story.)

Question 5: Canst thou keep all this perfectly?

Answer: No, for I am by nature prone to hate God and my neighbor.

Question 6: Did God create man wicked and perverse?

Answer: No, but God created man good and after His own image, that is, in righteousness

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(1) History of the American Sunday School Curriculum by Frank Glenn Lankard--p. 83

and true holiness that he might rightly know God his creator, heartily love Him, and live with Him in eternal blessedness, to praise and glorify Him.

Question 7: When then comes this depraved nature of man?

Answer: From the fall and disobedience of our first parents, Adam and Eve, in Paradise, whereby our nature became so corrupt, that we were all conceived and born in sin.

Question 10: Will God suffer such disobedience to go unpunished?

Answer: By no means; but He is terribly displeased with our inborn as well as actual sins, and will punish them in just judgment in time and eternity, as He has declared. Cursed is everyone that continued not in all things which are written in the book of the law, to them, Deut. 27:26.(1)

3. CATECHISM OF JOHN CALVIN.

Calvin in his work on the catechism considered it rather a privilege and duty to utilize his profound learning for the benefit of children. He treats of the religious constitution

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(1) Heidelberg Catechism, Central Publishing House, Cleveland, 1907

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(1) Heidelberg Catechism. Central Publishing House,
Cleveland, 1907

of man, the distinction between false and true religion, the knowledge of God, original state of man, free-will, sin and death. In 1536, during his residence in Geneva, he prepared a catechism in the French language. Later he rewrote it on a larger scale arranged in questions and answers, with the catechist draining out the information and the pupil teaching the master. It first appeared in French and Latin, and was translated into Italian, Spanish, English, German, Hungarian, Greek and Hebrew. It found a place in Reformed Churches and schools, especially in France and Scotland, by promoting an intelligent piety and virtue on the basis of systematic Biblical instruction. He argued that educational religion was the most substantial, and must be the main reliance of the church. His work is larger, but less popular and child-like, than Luther's. It prepared the way for similar works, while others have gradually superseded it. His catechism begins thus:

Q. "What is the chief end of human nature?"

A. "To know God."

This is the mainspring of all other principles presented--as communications made by God in order to meet man's aspirations, and enable him to regulate his life. We can call it neither a scientific method nor a philosophical work, but an historical fact and an explanation of the consequences of that fact. It is a natural method of imparting religious instruction, and is in harmony with the origin and history of Christianity.

He thinks of God as Creator, man His creature, and their relation to each other. Children were compelled to stay at the close of the Sunday Church Service for instruction in this catechism. He believed very thoroughly in all things standing the test of the intellect.(1)

4. THE WESTMINSTER SHORTER CATECHISM.

The Assembly of Divines at Westminster compiled "The Westminster Shorter Catechism" in 1648. It begins with the question, "What is the chief end of man?" It is answered by saying that the chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever. The Bible is the only true guide to man. God is said to be a Spirit manifested in three ways, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, but all are but one God. Creation is one of the things God has foreordained to come to pass, and it was not until creation was completed that the reign of Providence began. Man through sin lost all special favors which Providence may have given him. God sent Jesus to become the Redeemer for sin and the Saviour of the world. God's great moral law is summed up in the Ten Commandments, explained in detail in the catechism. The sacraments of the New Testament are Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Prayer is defined as "the offering up of our desires to God for things agreeable to His will, in the Name of Christ, with confessions of our

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(1) Information on Calvin found in Encyclopedia Britannica --Vol. V

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(1) Information on Calvin found in Encyclopedia Britannica --Vol. V

sins and thankful acknowledgment of his mercies." (1)

The following selections are taken from the Primary and Junior Catechism:

Question: Who made you?

Answer: God made me.

Question: Who is God?

Answer: God is my heavenly Father.

Question: What kind of a Father is God?

Answer: God is a good and loving Father.

Question: What book tells us about God?

Answer: The Bible tells us about God.(2)

In the Intermediate Catechism is found the following little bit of advice:

"The Assembly expresses the hope that the Intermediate Catechism will be the means of advancing the cause of religious instruction in the home and in our churches."

Example:

Question 1: What do we most need to know?

Answer: We most need to know what God would have us believe and do.

Question 2: Where do we best learn what God would have us believe and do?

Answer: We best learn what God would have us believe

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(1) History of the American Sunday School Curriculum by Frank Glenn Lankard--p. 73

(2) Primary and Junior Catechism, Copyrighted in 1898, by Trustees of the Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath School Work

and do in the Bible.

Question 12: Who is Jesus Christ?

Answer: Jesus Christ is God's eternal and only begotten Son who humbled Himself to become man, and so is God and man.

Question 37: What is the Lord's Supper?

Answer: The Lord's Supper is the sacred use of bread and of the cup, as appointed by the Lord Jesus, in which, in thankful remembrance of Him, we show forth His death and, in communion with one another, by faith partake of Him.

Question 70: What is a Christian's true success in life?

Answer: A Christian's true success in life is faithfulness to God and man in duties great and small.(1)

5. THE ANGLICAN CATECHISM.

The Church of England followed the example of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches, providing for regular catechetical instruction. In 1545 Henry VIII set forth a primer which was to be taught, learned and read without exception in all his dominions. Curates throughout his kingdom were enjoined to teach the people the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the

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(1) Intermediate Catechism, published by Board of Christian Education of the Presbyterian Church

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(1) Intermediate Catechism, published by Board of Christian Education of the Presbyterian Church

Ten Commandments sentence by sentence on Sundays and holidays, and he made all recite them when they came to Confession. When the Reformation was introduced under Edward VI, and the Book of Public Worship was prepared, a catechism was embodied in it to insure general instruction in the elements of the Christian religion. "Confirmation" is the title it bears in the Prayer Books of Edward VI and Elizabeth. In the last Prayer Book in 1661 the title was changed to "A Catechism."

An example of the earliest edition:

Q. What is the outward visible sign or form in Baptism?

A. Water: wherein the person baptised is dipped or sprinkled with it, in the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Example of 1661 edition:

Q. What is the outward visible sign or form in Baptism?

A. Water: wherein the person is baptised in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.(1)

About the only variation we find is in the answers which are given in less detail. A fuller catechism was prepared by Paynet, Bishop of Winchester, and published together with the Forty-two Articles, in Latin and English in 1553.

The Church of England Catechism was the principal text of the first modern Sunday School. It required the memorization of a large amount of Bible passages and catechism material.

The established Church of England uses today the catechism

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(1) Shaff--The Creeds of Christendom--Vol. I

from the Book of Common Prayer with few changes from its original form. Its two main divisions are:

First--Baptismal covenant, Apostolic Creed, Decalogue and Lord's Prayer

Second--Sacraments of Baptism, Lord's Supper[1]

As this is one of the catechismsused today, a further study of it will be made later in this paper.

A large number of private catechisms have been published in the English Church-- among them Cranmer's and Novel's in 1570. Dr. Watts, among the most famous of English Protestant dissenters, compiled a catechism which has already been discussed in this paper.

In conclusion the following comparison could be made between the Lutheran, Anglican, Heidelberg and Westminster Catechisms.

Lutheran	1529	The shortest and simplest
Anglican	1549	More churchly, fuller, and richer in content
Heidelberg	1563	More devotional and precise
Westminster	1646	Clearest and most logical with answers in form of theological definitions.[2]

6. OTHER CATECHISMS.

A Scripture Catechism. Menzies Rayner, a Massachusetts

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(1) The Book of Common Prayer--1929
Catechism section beginning on p. 571

(2) Class notes from course under Dr. H. H. Meyer in History of Religious Education, summer 1930

clergyman, wrote a Scripture Catechism, the content of which is biblical rather than doctrinal. A study is made of all the important characters and events in the Old and New Testament. Creation, Cain and Abel, Moses and the Hebrew Nation, David the Psalmist and King of Israel, Jeremiah, Ezekrel, Daniel, Job, Jesus, the Apostles, Evangelists, and Paul the Apostle are some of the subjects covered. Many of the answers are given in Scriptural language. Example:

Q. How long was God employed in the work of creation?

A. Six days. "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is." Gen. 1:31; Exod. XX.(1)

A Catechism of Religious and Social Duties. Hezekiah Packard prepared a catechism in 1796 called "A Catechism Containing the First Principles of Religion and Social Duties." What to do and not to do, and how to gain the favor of God is the chief purpose of the book. It is divided into three sections:

Section I--An Applied Religion

Q. 3: What must you do to please and enjoy God forever?

A. I must love and serve God; I must love and

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(1) History of the American Sunday School Curriculum by Frank Glenn Lankard--p. 89

obey my parents; I must speak the truth, and be just and kind.(1)

Section II--A Political Catechism to Train Children in the Duties of Citizenship

Q. Are all men free and equal?

A. Though men possess a diversity of talents and advantages, they are born equally free with regards to rights, obligations, and duties, essential to human nature.

Q. What was our Saviour's conduct with regard to the rulers and laws of His country?

A. He paid respect and yielded obedience to both.(2)

Section III--Supposed to be helpful to young people and the heads of families. Some of its divisions are "Distinctions between Natural Religion and Revelation," "Profaning the Name of God," "Intemperance," "Extravagance," "Injustice," and "Wantonness."

Q. What is pride?

A. Pride is the degrading passion which leads a man to think too highly of himself and too meanly of others.(3)

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(1) History of the American Sunday School Curriculum by Frank Glenn Lankard--p. 90

(2) History of the American Sunday School Curriculum by Frank Glenn Lankard--pp. 90-91

(3) History of the American Sunday School Curriculum by Frank Glenn Lankard--p. 91

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(1) History of the American Sunday School Curriculums by Frank Glenn Lankard--p. 90

(2) History of the American Sunday School Curriculums by Frank Glenn Lankard--pp. 90-91

(3) History of the American Sunday School Curriculums by Frank Glenn Lankard--p. 91

Q. What is malice?

A. Malice is a deliberate desire to injure others with provocation.

Q. What is envy?

A. Envy is that forbidden passion, which is offended with what it knows to be good, and hates what it is obliged to approve.(1)

It is interesting to note the emphasis this catechism places on the importance of religion in all the relationships of life.

The leaders of the Reformation were all school men who wanted for the people a fuller light and life. They saw the implications of a religious revival and sought to change the conditions of the Roman Church. They substituted an evangelical service for mass, and instituted catechetical instruction for youth.

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(1) History of the American Sunday School Curriculum by Frank Glenn Lankard--p. 91

CHAPTER III

ATTEMPTS AT GRADING CATECHETICAL MATERIAL

Many who wrote catechisms did not take the child and his lack of experience and understanding into consideration. However, there were a few writers of this "book of instruction" who felt that the material ought to be graded. As Wesley, Watts, and Zinzendorf were outstanding during the catechetical period in their attempts to understand children, we shall make a comparison of their theological beliefs and children's catechisms.

1. JOHN WESLEY.

Wesley acquired many of his ideas concerning the education of children from his mother Suzanna Wesley, who refused to trust her children to the local schoolmaster because of his wickedness and inability. Her "principal intention" in their training was to "save their souls." No books already in circulation suited her requirements so she prepared books of her own. Among them were expositions of the Ten Commandments, the Apostle's Creed, and a Religious Conference, "written for the use of my children" in the form of a dialogue with her daughter, Amelia. In the absence of her husband she often held religious services in their home, which were attended by the whole neighborhood. John spoke of her as a

"preacher of righteousness."

As for her theology she believed that the root of all evil was self-will, and that "Christ will be no Saviour to such as see not their need of one." Her greatest anxiety was that her children be saved. In a letter to Wesley written by his mother, giving advice to parents in the religious training of children, she reveals a discipline strict and persistent, but calm and unhurried.

According to Wesley, the foundation of religious education is to cure the disease of self-will. It is the wise parent who will subdue this will as soon as it appears in the little child. Other diseases that call for early treatment are the Love of the World, and Pride. As soon as they make their appearance they should be replaced by the Love of God. The parent should not praise the child for none other than religious worth, for it will teach him to value the unworthy. "Those who teach children to love praise, train them up for the devil."

He believed in teaching the child in such a way that he would desire repentance--by giving him to understand that he has fallen short of the image of God, and has become wicked, foolish, and ignorant. Salvation can come through Christ alone.

Though Wesley's methods are strict, he advises "mildness," softness, and gentleness in breaking the will of the child. Only when all other methods fail should drastic methods of instruction be employed.

The following incident shows a mutual fondness between Wesley and the children. "It was before a preaching service at Oldham, the children flocked about him and would not leave until he had shaken hands with each one of them."

In the process of instructing the little child he tried to use terms which he thought were within the capacity of the little child. "Even the Catechism of the Established Church is too long and too hard for children of six or eight years," said Wesley. "In speaking of God, interest the child first in the sun and its warmth and its work in causing flowers and grass and trees to grow." He, too, believed in "repetition." How much stress we still place on it today, for it is the only way that some children are capable of learning. He records the following: "I remember to have heard my father asking my mother, 'How could you have the patience to tell that blockhead the same thing twenty times o'er?' She answered, 'Why, if I had told him but nineteen times, I should have lost all my labor.'" (1)

In his preface to his "Lessons for Children" and "Instructions for Children," given to parents and schoolmasters, he gives the following rules:

1. Beware of the way in which you teach these deep things of God. Do not make children parrots, but Christians.(2)

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(1) All this information on Wesley found in John W. Prince's book on "Wesley on Religious Education"

(2) Lessons for Children, Instructions for Children by John Wesley

2. Be sure that they understand every sentence that they read.

3. They should not only be able to read, but to inwardly digest the words of eternal life.

4. Do not fail to commend both yourself and your little ones to God.(1)

Wesley includes in these "Lessons" the whole of the New Testament and all the books of the Old Testament with the exception of Ruth, Song of Solomon, Lamentations, and the Minor Prophets. It is divided into six sections and contains fifty-eight lessons.

Sections:
I. On God
II. Nature of God and Soul of Man
III. How to Regulate Our Desires
IV. How to Regulate Our Understanding
V. How to Regulate Our Joy
VI. How to Regulate Our Practice(2)

Children should be taught to pray in private as well as in family worship, was another of Wesley's teachings. But before the child can pray his soul must be awakened, and he must be redeemed. Through children's prayers there should be aroused a reverence for God, a due sense of the corruption

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(1) Lessons for Children, Instructions for Children by John Wesley

(2) Lessons for Children by John Wesley

of human nature, receptivity to spiritual things, a desire to become more spiritual, and a deep sincerity.

His catechisms are three in number and written for various age groups.

No. I--For Children of Tender Years

Sections: I. God
II. The Creation of Man
III. The Fall of Man
IV. The Redemption of Man
V. Heaven and Hell

Examples from Section I:

Q. Who made you?

A. God.

Q. Who is God?

A. An Infinite and Eternal Spirit, One that always was and always will be.(1)

I wonder how much meaning the words Infinite and Eternal Spirit have to the little child of four and five years. They are so abstract and far beyond the comprehension of many adults, let alone the little child.

No. II--For Children of Seven Years of Age and Upwards

Practically the same as No. I with few sections and Scriptural Proofs added.

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(1) Catechism of John Wesley, 1829

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(1) Catechism of John Wesley. 1829

Example of Section I--God:

Q. What is God?

A. An Infinite and Eternal Spirit. John IV-24.

Examples of Section XI--Death and Judgment:

Q. What is death?

A. The separation of the soul from the body.

Q. Is it not a fearful thing to die?

A. It is, to all but true Christians.(1)

No. III--For the Use of Young Persons

This is written in the form of a dialogue between the pupil and teacher, with the pupil asking the question and the teacher answering.

Example:

Youth: Does God make revelation of His will to every man?

Teacher: Not immediate revelations. He revealed His will to Adam, then to Noah, and Abraham, and others among the patriarchs; to Moses and the Prophets, and finally by Christ and His apostles. We acknowledge no other revelations, and these were intended in different degrees for the benefit of mankind at large.(2)

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(1) Catechism of John Wesley, 1829

(2) Catechism of Wesleyan Methodists, No. III, For Use of Young Persons--p. 11

Sections: I. Definitions and Explanations

II. A Revelation from God Highly Probable and Necessary

III. The Evidence by Which a Revelation May Be Satisfactorily Proved To Be Divine

IV. The Antiquity, Genuineness, and Authenticity of the Books of Scriptrue

V. Internal Evidence of the Truth of Scripture

VI. Objections Answered(1)

2. ISAAC WATTS.

Isaac Watts is known as hymn writer and pioneer in preparing a manual in which the truths of religion were suitably adapted to the understanding of childhood. Dr. Samuel Johnson said of him: "For children he condescended to lay aside the scholar, the philosopher, and the wit, and to write little poems of devotion, and systems of instruction adapted to their minds and capacities, from the dawn of years through the gradations of advance in its morning of life." Among his earliest productions for children were his Divine Songs and Easy Catechisms. His children's catechisms were used in congregational churches until superseded by other manuals.

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(1) Catechism of Wesleyan Methodists, No. III, For Use of Young Persons

His First Catechism--For young children beginning at the age of three or four.

Aim: To get the most general and plainest principles of the Christian Religion in so short a form as to be easily learned by heart by a child of moderate capacity at four or five.(1)

Example:

Q. Can you tell me, child, who made you?

A. The Great God who made heaven and earth.

Q. And what if you do not fear God, nor love Him, nor seek to please Him?

A. Then I shall be a wicked child, and the Great God will be angry with me.(2)

The teacher was to see that the child understood each word of every question, and the pupil was expected to memorize the catechism verbatim before learning to read.

His Second Catechism--For children beginning at seven or eight years of age.

It is an enlargement upon the first and contains many more particulars, both of doctrine and duty. The answers are much longer, and more difficult, with Scripture verses added.

Example:

Q. Dear child, do you know what you are?

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(1) History of the American Sunday School Curriculum by Frank Glenn Lankard--p. 74

(2) History of the American Sunday School Curriculum by Frank Glenn Lankard--p. 75

A. I am a creature of God, for He made me both body and soul. Is. 45:11,12. "Thus saith the Lord, I have made the earth, and created man upon it." Job. 10:11. "Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh and fenced me with bones and sinews." Zech. 12:1. "The Lord who formeth the spirit of man within him." (1)

His Third Catechism--For youth at twelve or fourteen years. Here the pupils enter into the deep things of life.

Example:

Q. What is the chief end of man?

A. Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.

Chief end--The chief design for which man was made, and which man should chiefly seek for.

To glorify God--To do Him honor as the most glorious and most excellent Being.

To enjoy God--To rejoice in His presence and His love.(2)

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(1) History of the American Sunday School Curriculum by Frank Glenn Lankard--p. 75

(2) History of the American Sunday School Curriculum by Frank Glenn Lankard--p. 77

His Catechism on the Sins and Follies of Youth

Example:

Q. What is the first mark of ungodliness?

A. If I never know nor praise God for His own greatness and glory.

Q. What are the ill consequences of sinful anger?

A. These five.

Q. What is the first?

A. Railing and calling ill names.

Reason against this sin: Because railers are not fit for sober company, and are very displeasing to God.

The follies and frailities of children and youth are included under the following heads: 1. A Whimsical or Capricious Temper; 2. Peevishness; 3. Impatience; 4. Selfishness; 5. Uncleanliness; 6. Heedlessness; 7. Rashness; 8. Fickleness; 9. Profaneness; 10. Tattling.(1)

The religious views of Isaac Watts were more liberal in tone than was at that time common in the community to which he belonged. He insisted on gradation of subject matter for various age groups so that children could understand what they were memorizing. Each catechism was to contain an abstract of Christianity, or a view of our whole religion in miniature. Simple words and short phrases were to be used. It was the

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(1) History of the American Sunday School Curriculum by Frank Glenn Lankard--p. 79

duty of each teacher to see that the child understood each question and answer before the next one was asked. Memorization of the catechism was required before the child could learn to read. At the completion of this catechetical course the child may have been able to repeat words, but such abstract thoughts could not possibly have had any meaning to him.

3. LUDWIG VON ZINZENDORF.

Zinzendorf also came from a cultural and devout Christian family. They were friends and followers of Spencer. Due to the early death of his father Zinzendorf was brought up by his maternal grandmother and his aunt. Many times he overheard his grandmother having "conversations with the Saviour." His aunt prayed with him morning and evening. After forty years he looked back upon his home training in religion as having "definitely determined the whole future manner of his life."

Reading the records of his work for and fellowship with children is a testimony of his fondness for them. He organized choirs for various age groups; on Sunday, April 2, in London, he inaugurated the Sunday afternoon children's hour in Church Lane and inspected the new building devoted to the children, which institution, according to his own account, "radiated nothing but grace and blessedness."

His Religious Educational Principles

1. Free development in the individual. Children should

be permitted to engage in all kinds of free play, for this will lead to happiness which is a natural characteristic of childhood. Free development will make for straightforwardness and self-knowledge.

The child should not be forced by his parents to become a child of God, but led to discover the beauty of the Christian life in the example of his parents.

2. Principle of religious growth. For the little child he pictures sin as a contagious and fatal disease which came upon mankind through Adam's disobedience, but Christ, the Great Physician, provides a remedy for this malady through the sacrament of Baptism. The original state of the child is a state of innocence. No child, because of original sin, is excluded from the kingdom of God. Child nurture according to Zinzendorf is "a sacred priestly method whereby souls are brought up from infancy so as not to think otherwise than that they belong to Christ so that blessedness for them shall consist in knowing and serving Him, and their greatest misfortune in becoming separated from Him in any way whatsoever."

To the preservation of the child in its original innocence and baptismal grace, and the establishment of conscious personal experience of love and service must be added instruction.(1)

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(1) This information on Zinzendorf was found in Child Nature and Nurture According to Nicolous Ludwig Von Zinzendorf, by H. H. Meyer

For this instruction Zinzendorf has written several catechisms.

His first one, Lantere Milch (Pure Milk of the Teachings Concerning Jesus Christ), written in 1723, exemplifies his theory and practice of child nurture. It was prepared for the honor of little children and the advantage of parents. It is composed of seventy-eight questions and answers. Bible verses are added to all the answers to acquaint the child with the language of God. He tries to begin with that which is nearest and most real to the little child.

Example:

Q. 1. What are you? Are you a tree or an animal or a human person?

A. I am a human person. "For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me, and I say to this man, go, and he goeth; and to another, come, and he cometh; and to my servant, do this, and he doeth it." Matt. 8:9

Q. 2. Do you feel it when I take hold of you?

A. I can feel it well.(1)

Some of the questions deal with the destiny of the soul.

Q. 9. Behold, dear child, the body is a dwelling

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(1) Child Nature and Nurture According to Nicolous Ludwig Von Zinzendorf by H. H. Meyer

place in which the soul or spirit lives. When this comes out, then the body or dwelling place cannot stir or move itself anymore. Why, then, do people die?

A. Because the soul has moved out of the body. "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." James 2:26.

He also dwells on the goodness and nearness of God.

Q. 19. See we are in the church, there is an altar, there the pulpit, table, benches, etc. Has anybody made these things?

A. Oh, yes, somebody must have made them.

Q. 20. Then someone must also have made heaven?

A. Yes, surely someone made heaven also. "In the beginning God created the heaven and earth." Gen. 1:1.

But God's goodness does not prevent his being stern, for He cannot tolerate evil or wickedness. He then gives a word picture of the fall of the first parents as follows:

Q. 44. Did the people become sick that they became so unlovely?

A. Yes, they became deathly sick and that is why they became unlovely.(1)

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(1) Child Nature and Nurture According to Nicolous Ludwig Von Zinzendorf by H. H. Meyer

Q. 45. How did that happen? Did they perhaps eat something that made them sick?

A. Yes, yes, they ate something that made them so sick. "And the Lord, God, commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Gen. 2:17,17.(1)

He portrays Jesus as the Physician sent by God to heal disobedience, and as one who helps people today as he did then.

The Commandments as simple rules of conduct are given in the concluding section of the catechism. By obeying them the little child can show his love for the Saviour, and to the Heavenly Father.

This catechism of Zinzendorf's appears to be better adapted to the capacities of children than either those of Watts or Wesley, for it is less theological. He makes his appeal to the child through the motive of love rather than fear. He tries to create an atmosphere of trust and devotion rather than one of commands and rewards. The whole catechism reflects his attempt to understand both the limitations and possibilities of the religious experience of the child. He was able to put

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(1) Child Nature and Nurture According to Nicolous Ludwig Von Zinzendorf by H. H. Meyer

himself in the place of the little child, and spent as much time as possible with them. He recognized that happiness was a natural characteristic of childhood, that free development makes for straightforwardness and self-knowledge, that the child should not be punished without being first convinced of his wrongdoing, and that development should not be hampered from within. He believed that all children begin life as members of the kingdom of Heaven, and they are redeemed through the suffering and death of Christ. He grew very impatient with those who insisted upon a conversion experience in children. It was his belief that Christ was already near to them, and they would get their salvation through growth in grace.

Gervisser Grund, his second catechism, written in 1725, is a product of his early enthusiasm for religious education. As a basis for a discussion of Christian doctrine, he uses Luther's Shorter Catechism. He calls this one a "theology" for the general use and instruction of older boys and girls. He displays much originality of thought and organization of the subject matter and reveals his rich store of Scriptural knowledge. This catechism was used among Moravian congregations until its suppression as unorthodox by order of the royal commission of 1736.

The Catechisms of Zinzendorf constitute the most complete group of his literary productions. They are characterized by their: 1. Simplicity of language, 2. Simplicity of ideas,

3. Biblical groupings, 4. Psychological approach, 5. Emphasis on experience.

These three men have all made in their catechetical writings an attempt to simplify theological dogma in due respect to the capacity of the little child. Wesley and Watts, in spite of the fact that they tried to grade and simplify their subject matter, kept pretty much to formal theological statements, while Zinzendorf made his less theological and more pedagogical. His was the inductive method, going from the known to the unknown. He makes his appeal more through the elements of love and devotion while Wesley and Watts seem to make their appeal through the elements of fear and reward. Zinzendorf emphasized the positive in his teaching while Wesley and Watts had a tendency to emphasize the negative. Zinzendorf also seemed better able to put himself in the place of the child.

I am a little child you see,
My strength is little too,
And yet I fain would happy be:
Lord, teach me what to do.

4. COMPARISON OF CATECHISMS

	How they begin	Aim	Some of concepts considered	Who is God?	Some of their religious education principles
WESLEY	Q. Who made you? A. God. Q. Who is God? A. An Infinite and Eternal Spirit, One that always was and always will be.	To lead the child to desire repentance. To teach him to fear God.	1. God 2. Fall of man 3. Creation 4. Redemption 5. Heaven 6. Hell	An Infinite and Eternal Spirit, One that always was and always will be.	1. Very logical in educational principles 2. Believed in education as a method of bringing religion to children 3. Training should begin at home 4. Strict discipline; breaking of self-will in child 5. God the end of all things 6. Be patient 7. Use repetition
WATTS	Q. Can you tell me, child, who made you? A. The Great God who made heaven and earth.	To get most general principles of Christian Religion in short form.	1. Soul 2. God 3. His relation to us 4. Love for Him 5. Sins to avoid 6. God's wrath 7. Heaven 8. Hell 9. Bible	God is a Spirit Infinite and Eternal and unchangeable in wisdom, being, power, holiness, justice, goodness, truth.	1. Gradation of subject matter 2. Before going to next question child must understand previous question 3. Explanation of terms used 4. No freedom of thought or expression 5. Subject matter same for all ages--tried to make it understandable to little child by simplifying language
ZINZENDORF	Q. What are you? Are you a tree, or an animal, or a human person? A. I am a human person. Q. What is this; is this not flesh? A. Yes, that is flesh.	To preserve the original innocence of the child and to teach in such a way that he will want to live the Christian Life	1. Soul 2. Heaven 3. Hell 4. God 5. Bible 6. Evil 7. Jesus 8. Baptism 9. Love by doing as Jesus would like you to do	God is the Person who made heaven. (Taught by inductive method)	1. Free development 2. Religious growth 3. Training in home 4. Grading of subject matter --both worship and instruction 5. Fellowship of teacher and pupil 6. He put his theory into practice

Chart based on reading catechisms of Watts, Wesley, and Zinzendorf.

3. Biblical groupings, 4. Psychological approach, 5. Emphasis

4. CONPARISON OF CATECHISMS

	How they begin	Aim	Some of concepts considered	Who is God?
WESLEY	Q. Who made you? A. God. Q. Who is God? A. An Infinite and Eternal Spirit, One that always was and always will be.	To lead the child to desire repentance. To teach him to fear God.	1. God 2. Fall of man 3. Creation 4. Redemption 5. Heaven 6. Hell	An Infinite and Eternal Spirit, One that always was and always will be.
WATTS	Q. Can you tell me, child, who made you? A. The Great God who made heaven and earth.	To get most general principles of Christian Religion in short form.	1. Soul 2. God 3. His relation to us 4. Love for Him 5. Sins to avoid 6. God's wrath 7. Heaven 8. Hell 9. Bible	God is a Spirit Infinite and Eternal and unchanged able in wisdom, being, power, holiness, justice, goodness, truth.
EINZEND ORF	Q. What are you? Are you a tree, or an animal, or a human person? A. I am a human person. Q. What is this; is this not flesh? A. Yes, that is flesh.	To preserve the original innocence of the child and to teach in such a way that he will want to live the Christian Life	1. Soul 2. Heaven 3. Hell 4. God 5. Bible 6. Evil 7. Jesus 8. Baptism 9. Love by doing as Jesus would like you to do	God is the Person who made heaven. (Taught by inductive method)

Chart based on reading catechisms of Watts, Wesley

CHAPTER IV

AN EVALUATION OF CATECHETICAL MATERIAL

It was not realized during the so-called "Catechetical Period" nor is it fully realized today that merely storing away in the mind the verbal form of a truth which is not understood is far from teaching that truth. So often the child was left to struggle with religious thoughts deep enough for the most highly trained mind. We must beware of ideas that are merely received into the mind without being utilized or tested, for the result may be harmful. The education the child receives ought to be useful. The knowledge of the past should equip him for the present. The chief objective of all the catechetical material was to get the child right with God and to prepare him for the future life. So much of the material concentrated on sin, preparation for death, and the securing of God's favor. Its subject matter was so narrow and restricted without thought of the present life the child had to live. Its method, as well as the aim, was narrow in that the child was supposed to memorize all answers to the questions asked by his teacher, the catechist. Excessive use of the memory weakens or deadens the power of thought. It should be kept auxiliary to the other powers of the mind and not allowed to supplant them.

1. ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF ITS USE.

a. The use of the doctrinal catechism in Bible School instruction may have had some justification for the teaching of the adolescent as it is a period of doubt and criticism, and requires clear and definite statements concerning the facts and development of the spiritual life.

b. Young minds can easily grasp and retain memorized truths.

c. Children and youth should not be permitted to grow up in ignorance of the fundamental truths of the Christian religion.

d. It was systematic and logical in its arrangement.

e. It emphasized doctrines which were very important at that time.

2. ARGUMENTS AGAINST ITS USE.

a. It made the child a mere machine to grind out the grists of others.

b. It failed to follow the fundamental laws of education--interest, adaptation, apperception, and the like.(1) However, we must not fail to take into account the attempts that were made to adapt the material to various age groups. Wesley published a book entitled "Instructions for Children," and Isaac Watts divided his work into First, Second, and

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(1) The Pedagogical Bible School by Samuel B. Haslett, 1903

Third Catechisms. But so little was known of the nurture and development of the child that all attempts to make the material understandable to him failed.

c. It overemphasizes the faculty of memory by compelling it to carry that which has no meaning to the mind.

d. It is a cram method of instruction.

e. It has more the spirit of denominationalism than the Spirit of the Master, and was more for the purpose of producing churchmen than for the purpose of producing Christians.

f. It emphasized the spirit of intellect, philosophy, logic and dogma, with no thought of the ethical, scientific, historical or sociological aspects

g. It has the tendency to encourage controversy and division in the church instead of unity and fellowship.(1)

Scientific tests have proved that merely acquiring knowledge does not vitally influence the character and conduct of the learner. It must build itself into living experience and cause the learner to think, feel, and act. "Religion is a way of thinking and feeling and doing and being throughout the whole range of the day's living--of thinking and feeling and doing and being with reference to three great realities: ourselves, our fellowmen, and God." (2)

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(1) The Pedagogical Bible School by Samuel B. Haslett, 1903

(2) Methods in Teaching Religion by Betts and Hawthorne --pp. 52, 53

3. THE SUBJECT MATTER CHOSEN.

a. Its Purpose. The proposition presented by the early Christian doctrine was: "If men are to be controlled you must first control their thoughts." To the first Christians there were three great sources of evil: the world, the flesh, and the devil. The learner must be taught to renounce the world, subdue flesh, and escape evil. Their one purpose was to save souls and their chief aim was regeneration for the purpose of salvation. However, I think we can say that the early Christians had some pedagogical insight. They argued that bad thoughts must be kept out by supplying good ones, and that the future held joys for those who merited it and torment for those who fell short of the standard.

b. Its Content. The doctrine of original sin played such an important part in the content of their subject matter. Luther accepted it and Calvin made it the central thought of his teaching. Speaking of children, Calvin said, "They bring condemnation with them from their mother's womb. They are odious and abominable to God." (1) The defenders of "original sin" state that no good trait exists in the "natural man." A miraculous change through repentance and regeneration must take place before there can be any spiritual growth or up-building in the individual. Naturally all religious instruction

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(1) Methods in Teaching Religion by Betts and Hawthorne --p. 40

and guidance aimed toward conversion, and any education which took place after the individual was "saved" was secondary. Such a thing as a growth process was entirely outside of their interests.

Let us stop for a moment to compare these views with the more modern religious educationist. It is his belief that the natural tendencies toward wrongdoing ought to be suppressed by a well-planned program of religion, and that all good tendencies ought to be stimulated and set to work through natural avenues of expression. He attempts to make the child aware of the Power that is constantly working with him for his happiness and his good. The child is led to think of himself as a member of God's great family, subject to its laws of conduct and action and benefited by its relationship. The older system of education then, we might say, sought for a sudden change and revolution in the individual, while the newer system places its emphasis on the slower and more natural and effective process of growth and evolution. The methods of the older were evangelistic, and those of the newer, educational.

During the period of the catechism the subject matter, instead of the child, held the center of attention. The catechist who taught John the catechism lost himself in the material and forgot John's spiritual interests and needs. The importance of subject matter is measured by its power to stimulate, feed, or guide growing experience. We must admit

that it is much easier to teach subject matter with its organized and systematized truth than it is to teach the child; it is much more difficult to create interest, invite imagination, and create ideals that express themselves in action than it is to present a body of prepared subject matter in goodly fashion. It is much easier to find a teacher who can "teach the Bible" or the catechism than one who can teach the child. I do not mean to say that subject matter is unimportant, for it is; but it should be so well mastered by the teacher before coming before his group that he can give all his thought to the "human element" before him.

So often the catechetical subject matter portrayed God as a God of fear, and as a high Potentate whose favor must be won. The following selection is a good example:

> "O God, be merciful to me, a miserable sinner, for His sake whom Thou hast exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance and forgiveness of sins. Help me to feel, bewail and forsake my offences, and may I never want the comfortable assurance of Thy forgiveness of them, and of Thy love to me, in the blessed Son of Thy eternal love." (1)

If the child could be taught to think of God as a God of Love, the Creator of the Universe, a Protector, and a Friend, the

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(1) Appendix of the Catechism of the Wesleyan Methodists, compiled and published by order of the British Conference, 1829

relationship to Him immediately changes from that of fear to one which inspires feelings of love, reverence, awe, and worship, as found in the following verse:

"All things bright and beautiful,
All things great and small,
All things wise and wonderful,
Our Father made them all.
Each little flower that opens,
Each little bird that sings,
He made their glowing colors,
He made their tiny wings." (1)

Each person must be able to read the Holy Scriptures for himself, for how could he be guided by it if he could not read it? There was a time when the state was a religious establishment, all offices were held by churchmen, the wars were religious wars, and all schools were built on a religious foundation. The studies were mostly theological and the primary aim was to prepare men for service in the church. Life itself was centered around religion and the church in America was founded by those who came to secure the religious freedom they could not have at home. To them the Word of God was the most important thing in life. The Bible was read daily and used to settle business and personal problems. They interpreted very literally the words of the catechism, "The chief

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(1) First Book in Hymns and Worship by Edith Lovell Thomas--pp. 44

end of man was to glorify God." Failure of crops, fires, etc., were brought upon those who disobeyed the laws of God. The preamble of the Massachusetts law of 1647 made religion more important than education: "It being one chief project of that old deluder, Satan, to keep men from the knowledge of the Scriptures, as in former times by keeping them in an unknown tongue, so in these latter times by persuading from the use of tongues, therefore be it ordained....." and the provision for setting up schools follows.(1) An old Dutch farmer expressed the desire of many when he said, "The Bible and figgers is all the education I want my boy to have." In the New York colony the teachers were instructed to teach the common prayers and catechisms twice a week, as well as to have them prepared for their Sunday lessons. During the week the children were quizzed on the sermon of the preceding Sunday, requiring them to remember both text and topic and all the outstanding sections. In the free town school of Dorchester the following rule was laid down for the teacher: "Every day of the week at two of the clock in the afternoon he shall catechize his schools in the principles of Christian Religion in some catechism which the warden shall provide." (2)

It was quite natural for the colonists to turn to the subject matter that they had been taught and with which they

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(1) The Curriculum of Religious Education by Betts--pp. 50,51

(2) The Curriculum of Religious Education by Betts--p. 52

were familiar. As it was a period when doctrine was strongly stressed, thoughts were turned toward the catechism which had already been published.

Earliest among the textbooks used in American education was the Horn Book, which was no more than a thin piece of paper attached to a thin board shaped like a paddle. On it was written the Lord's Prayer, the Creed and the Apostolic benediction. From this the child was advanced to the Psalm book, the catechism, or the Bible. The New England Primer soon took the place of the Horn Book in instructing the youth in the ways it must go. So important was the catechetical material in it that the children learned it, the minister preached it, and the parents talked it. The Shorter Catechism embodied in the New England Primer consisted of one hundred and seven questions and answers which the children were required to memorize, and recite to the teacher and the minister on his visits to the school. Education was an ecclesiastical method rather than a means of human development. Likewise, the Sunday School, until it was institutionalized by the church, taught secular as well as religious subjects. When the Sunday School first took up the work of teaching religion, its chief concern was that all its members be correct in doctrine. What one believed was much more important than how one lived. The catechism supplied this need, and naturally were used exclusively as Sunday School curriculum material. Luther and Watts argued that all difficult phases in the

catechism should be explained, but the early Sunday Schools were not so much concerned with the explanation of the various passages and their effect upon conduct as they were with lodging doctrines in the minds of their pupils, hoping that some time it would take effect and "save" them. Example:

Q. What are the first principles of religion?

A. He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.

Q. How may all men know there is a God?

A. The invisible things (attributes) of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead: so that they are without excuse. (Scripture Catechism printed in Boston in 1804).

Q. How do you prove the being or existence of God?

A. God like the sun is seen by His own light; and from the idea of a God we naturally infer His self-existence.

Q. Do not the powers of conscience attest the being of God?

A. They do. Can remorse and anguish of mind proceed from any other cause than the idea of a just and

avenging God?[1]

The home was instructed by the church to teach the catechism. The following is an example from one of the parental catechisms:

> My dear son, it is the devout wish of your father to give you, in short lessons, such a view of the Christian religion, of its nature, glory and design, that the temptations of future life shall never efface the image from your mind. Was not this Saint Paul's design in writing to the Romans?
>
> A. He wrote that they might know what was the good and acceptable will of God concerning them, and glorify Him in their bodies and spirits which were His. (Roman 12:1,2)
>
> Q. Is not this a duty required by all parents by revelation?
>
> A. Moses says of the divine precepts, "Thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children"; and Solomon, "Train up a child in the way he shall go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it"; and Saint Paul, "Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." (Eph. 6:4)[2]

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(1) The Albion Catechism by Josep Lutchiffe, London, 1806

(2) The Curriculum of Religious Education by Betts--pp. 90, 91

Q. Can you tell me how it is that all the sons of Adam are now degraded from their original excellence?

A. Adam, in the garden of Eden, was placed in a state of probation; for otherwise his obedience could not have been known to be free and unconstrained. (1)

4. THE METHOD USED.

Throughout the catechetical period it is very evident that subject matter was taught and not the child, and that the experiences of the learner were left without consideration. The materials forced upon the child were much too advanced for his age and called for too difficult reasoning, and made religion a dead subject. To teach that God is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, will not enrich the concept of God. There must be a realization of His power at work in the world, and a sense of His presence everywhere, if the child is to become conscious of the meaning of the above terms. People were not expected to think, but to believe, have faith, and repeat creeds. We begin to think when we feel that there is a problem that needs solution. About the only problem which the catechism aroused in the child's mind was how he could get all the answers to the

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(1) The Curriculum of Religious Education by Betts -- p. 91.

questions memorized in the shortest time. It is true that knowing facts is a necessary part of one's education if they are not too far beyond the experience of the learner, as were those of the catechism. Again facts are valuable when they raise problems, which in turn arouse the thinking powers.

a. Memorization. As stated before, memorization was an important part of the catechetical method. This, too, has its good points, for

1. It gathers up and conserves for further use in learning and thinking various facts, dates, persons, incidents, events, and other required data.

2. It also preserves in the mind certain supposedly valuable and beautiful thoughts, sentiments, or teachings in the exact literary form in which they appear in the Bible, the catechism, or other religious literature.

In some of the catechisms there was a place for the teacher to sign at the bottom of the page when each child had learned verbatim the words on that page. No attempt was made to grasp the subject matter as a whole, or to teach an appreciation for that which was being memorized. Repeating a whole catechism word for word, even to remembering the order of the questions, was the standard set for a correctly educated person.

Imagination needs to be brought into play in the teaching of religion, as well as in the teaching of any other subject. But such abstract statements and broad generalizations as "Infinite and Eternal Spirit" will not call forth imagery. Concrete words and phrases must be used to stimulate the imagination.

b. Questions and Answers. The question-and-answer method used so predominately in catechetical instruction has its advantages if suited to the age of the child, and if it succeeds in arousing interest and curiosity in the mind of the learner. It should lead the child step by step into the expression of his own thoughts, and afford an interchange of thought and sympathy between the pupil and the teacher. But the teacher who must depend upon the textbook for the phrasing of the questions, as did the catechist, cannot teach the pupil, but only the subject. Questions should not be too long and involved as those of the catechism so often were:

> "How does it appear that the account the Scriptures give us of man's moral state, which is indeed sufficiently humbling, is confirmed by observation and experience?"

In our evaluation of the catechetical method we must not forget that the spirit of the age emphasized correctness in doctrine. The leaders of the period did have the interest of the child at heart or they would not have written their cate-

chisms to try to help him prepare for that "other world". But examining them in the light of what we know today of child development, we find the material far beyond the comprehension of any child. In our educational system today we feel that the child must be given a chance for free expression, and this the catechetical material failed to do.

5. ITS PERIOD OF DECLINE.

Beginning about 1815 the catechism began to lose its favor in some schools, and the Bible became the center of attention. In other words, scripture rather than doctrine seemed of greater importance. This change from "catechism centered" curriculum to "Bible centered" curriculum came about very gradually. Even after the Bible was considered the textbook for teaching religion, one Sunday a month was given to the study of church doctrine. Some of the first lesson materials published by the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society about 1831 proved so unpopular that the catechism regained its favor for a short time. Catechetical material was so definite and systematic, and easy for the teacher to present, that it made the new material appear difficult and unorganized. With the revival of the catechism during this period new ones were published and old ones

modified. The much-beloved New England Primer was republished in 1836 by the Massachusetts Sunday School Society. It was welcomed back into many homes like a long-lost friend. In the same year they published a series of Biblical catechisms for Infant Sunday Schools. The Topical Question Book, written by Joseph Banvard, is a good example of a doctrinal catechism of this period. It was true to form in that it was theological, metaphysical and formal. We find the greatest change taking place in the Presbyterian and Methodist Catechisms. James R. Boyd attempted an improvement on the Westminster Shorter Catechism in his work entitled "The Child's Book on the Westminster Catechism." The questions and answers both are much shorter and less involved. Example:

Q. Who made you?

A. God.

Q. For how long a time are you to know God, and thus be happy in His favor?

A. Forever.

Therefore 1. What is man's chief end?

Man's chief end is to glorify God and be happy forever.

Another section entitled "The Rule By Which Man Is To Glorify God" includes twelve questions and answers.

Q. Does man, of himself, know how to glorify God and

enjoy Him?

A. He does not; he needs some rule, some directions.

Q. Has God given any such rule? Has He spoken or written to us on the subject?

A. He has spoken or written to us all we need to know. The Bible is called the Word of God, because He has therein spoken to us. It is called the Scriptures, or writings because He has therein written to us.

Q. Did God write them Himself, or cause men to write them?

A. Except the Ten Commandments, which He Himself wrote, all the Bible was written by good men, whom He directed and taught what to write; so that what they have written has the same authority and value as if God had Himself written it.

There is another section on proving the Unity of God, as follows:

Q. How many gods are there?

A. There is but one.

Q. Are there not other beings or things that are called gods and worshipped as such?

A. Yes, a vast number, and of great variety.(1)

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(1) The Child's Book on the Westminster Shorter Catechism by James R. Boyd

Q. What names are applied to such in the Bible?

A. They are called idols, vanity, a lie.

There are other sections on the Trinity, the decrees of God, the plan of redemption, Repentance, and the Sacraments.(1)

Again we must give the people of this period the credit due them for trying to make the materials more understandable to the child.

In 1848 the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church authorized a committee to examine the Methodist Catechism and suggest revisions that might possibly be made. Revised catechisms were submitted to the committee in 1851 by E. Hedding, N. Bangs, S. Olin, and J. Holdich.

Example of Number III

Man's Fall and Sinful State

Q. Did our first parents continue holy and happy?

A. They sinned against God and fell into misery.

Q. What is sin?

A. Any transgression of the law of God.

Q. What was the sin of our first parents?

A. Their eating of the forbidden fruit.

Q. By whom were they tempted to sin?

A. By the devil in the form of a serpent.(2)

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(1) The Child's Book on the Westminster Shorter Catechism by James R. Boyd

(2) Catechism of Methodist Episcopal Church, Number III

Besides the chapters on creation, salvation, death, judgment, the Beautitudes, the Lord's Prayer, and the Sacraments, there were prayers for morning and evening:

> Almighty God, my heavenly Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast taken care of me the past night, and that I am alive and well this morning. Save me, O God, from evil all this day; and may I love and serve Thee always. Bestow on me, I pray Thee, every good thing which I need for my body and soul; assist me by Thy Holy Spirit to do Thy will; make me always afraid to offend Thee and let me live in Thy favor, and at last be saved in heaven for Christ's sake. Amen.(1)

Here again we see very little improvement over the earlier attempts at grading the materials.

About 1850 the catechism showed a marked decline, and never again had another revival. It was found that doctrine did not answer the need of teaching people to live together as intelligent Christians. It was more necessary to interpret scripture and to be able to apply its teachings. Christianity began to be thought of as more a way of life. The National Sunday School conventions of 1832, 1833, 1859, and 1869,

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(1) Catechism of Methodist Episcopal Church, Appendix

where various denominational groups met and discovered that they were all working toward the betterment of the social order, decided that doctrine alone was too narrow in its viewpoint, and was interested only in denominationalism. The Civil War taught that Christian fellowship must replace sectarian difference and jealousies. In the public school system the pupils were now being taught to think for themselves, and not merely to memorize matter they did not understand. Very slowly this influence carried over into the Sunday School curriculum.

Although the catechism never regained its former high place in the Sunday School curriculum, it still is present to a certain extent in our Sunday School curriculum of today.

In conclusion of this chapter on the evaluation of the catechism, let us give due credit to these early Christian leaders by saying that there must have been some value in the sincere purpose which gripped them as they taught thoroughly the mysteries of the Christian faith to those who wished to become members of the Christian Church.

CHAPTER V

LATER TENDENCIES IN THE USE OF THE CATECHISM

1. AS SUNDAY SCHOOL CURRICULA.

a. The David C. Cook Publications. Catechetical material is not a negative factor in some of our Sunday School curricula, even today. Perhaps it is not called specifically by that name, but the theory of it is there. For example, at the close of each lesson in some of our Sunday School Quarterlies there is a definite set of questions which are followed very religiously by many teachers, and often times a very exact answer is required of the pupil.

The Junior Teacher's Quarterly of 1933, published by David C. Cook, is a good example. There is one lesson entitled "A Love Sunday Program".

Q. Why do we love God?

B. 1 John 4:8. God is Love. 1 John 4:19. We love Him because He first loved us.

Q. How much does God love us?

B. John 3:16. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.(1)

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(1) The Junior Teacher's Quarterly, David C. Cook Publishing Company, January, 1933 -- p. 10.

Q. How much did Jesus say we should love God?

A. Matt. 22:37. Jesus said unto him, "Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.(1)

The lesson story is given in short numbered statements with the questions in a separate section.

Lesson Story

1. Jesus and His four disciples went together to the city of Capernoum.
2. On the Sabbath they went to the synagogue or church.
3. At the proper time Jesus arose and preached to the people.

Questions:

1. Who went to the city of Capernoum?
2. On the Sabbath where did Jesus and His disciples go?
3. What did Jesus do in the synagogue?

Memory Facts

If you can answer these questions without help write "yes" at the end of this sentence.

Q. Who went to the house of Simon and Andrew?

A. Jesus, James, and John.

Q. Whose wife's mother was in the house sick with a fever?

A. Simon Peter's.(2)

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(1) The Junior Teacher's Quarterly, David C. Cook Publishing Company, January, 1933--p. 10

(2) The Junior Teacher's Quarterly, David C. Cook Publishing Company, January, 1933--p. 33

Remember Daily

Jesus is ready to help those in need.

He hears and answers prayer.

We should tell others what we know about Jesus.

He can heal the sick.

We need to spend time alone with Jesus in prayer.(1)

In the "Little Learners Paper," published by the same company, the question-and-answer method is also used with the numbered statements in one section and the questions in another, as:

1. Jesus said we ought always to pray.
2. Jesus teaches us to pray aright. We should not pray for the sake of having others hear us.

Q. What did Jesus say about praying?

Q. Who teaches us that we should not pray for the sake of having others hear us?(2)

b. The Westminster Publications. In the 1919 edition of the Westminster Quarterly one section of the catechism is a very definite part of each lesson. Example:

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(1) The Junior Teacher's Quarterly, David C. Cook Publishing Company, January, 1933--p. 33

(2) Little Learners Paper, David C. Cook Publishing Company, October 2, 1932--p. 4

Lesson I

Title--The Bible, The Revelation of God

Lesson Material: Intermediate Catechism questions 1 to 6 with Scripture proof texts.

Illustration Biography: John Wycliff

Memory Work: Catechism questions 1 to 6. Learn one each day and review for Sunday.

Q. 1. What do we most need to know?

A. We most need to know what God would have us believe and do. Psalms 25:4, Matt. 7:21, John 17:3.(1)

In the review lesson the following statement is made about the catechism:

"You should be able to recite the Catechism perfectly from the beginning to end, even asking yourself the questions in their correct order. You remember that the secret of Stonewall Jackson's success at West Point was that he never left a lesson until he had mastered it. Determine that you will not put aside the Quarterly until you can recite the whole Catechism without error. This may seem a task, but unless you do this you will go through life with a

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(1) Intermediate Pupils' Quarterly, Westminster Departmental Series, January, 1919--p. 1

Lesson I

Title--The Bible, The Revelation of God

Lesson Material: Intermediate Catechism questions 1 to 6 with Scripture proof texts.

Illustration Biography: John Wycliff

Memory Work: Catechism questions 1 to 5. Learn one each day and review for Sunday.

Q. 1. What do we most need to know?

A. We most need to know what God would have us believe and do. Psalms 85:8, Matt. 7:21, John 17:3.(1)

In the review lesson the following statement is made about the catechism:

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(1) Intermediate Pupils' Quarterly. Westminster Department Series. January, 1919--p. 1

definite assigned task left unfinished. Begin now to make Stonewall Jackson's reputation for yourself."(1)

One lesson deals only with the questions on the Presbyterian Church:

Q. 46. Why is that branch of the church to which we belong called Presbyterian?

A. That branch of the church to which we belong is called Presbyterian because it is governed by presbyters or elders. Titus 1:5; Acts 15:22.

Q. 47. What do we mean by a presbytery?

A. By a presbytery we mean the presbyters or elders, equal in authority and organized to have charge of the church in a certain district. I Timothy 4:14; Acts 14:23.

Q. 48. Who are the officers of the Presbyterian Church?

A. The officers of the Presbyterian Church are ministers, ruling elders, and deacons.(2)

c. The Catechism of the Protestant Episcopal Church. The purpose of the catechism which is still used in the Protestant Episcopal Church is stated in the second part of its title: "An instruction to be learned by every person before he be

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(1) Intermediate Pupils' Quarterly, Westminster Departmental Series, January, 1919--p. 64

(2) Intermediate Pupils' Quarterly, Westminster Departmental Series, January, 1919--p. 41

confirmed by the Bishop." (1)

In the introduction of the 1922 edition of the Confirmation Instructions is another statement about the catechism being used for confirmation:

"You are coming to confirmation because Jesus Christ has called you to follow Him.

You love Him because He first loved you.

You fully realize that you have not chosen Him, but He has chosen you, because He loves you and is saying to you, 'If you love me, keep my Commandments.'

I am asking you to do certain things for Him in His name, as you prepare for confirmation.

First, I ask you to make use of your memory to store certain things in your treasure house which will be at your service all your life long. It has been one of the great regrets of my life that I did not commit to memory more treasures of the Gospel."

These lessons are divided into three parts:

1. That which you are to memorize
2. That which you are to study
3. That which you are to do (2)

In the 1928 edition of the Prayer Book the catechism was

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(1) The Sunday School Teachers Manual by Rev. William M. Groton S. T. D.--p. 151

(2) Confirmation Instructions by Irving Peake Johnson, 1922--pp. 1-4

relegated to the back. In the Prayer Book are also found worship services centered around the catechism, accompanied by appropriate hymns, prayers and responses. Example:

Offices of Instruction

First Office

After the singing of a hymn the minister shall say,

The Lord be with you.

Answer: And with thy spirit

Let us pray.

Lord of all power and might, Who are the author and giver of all good things; graft in our hearts the love of Thy Name, increase in us true religion, nourish us with all Thy goodness, and of Thy great mercy keep us in the same; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Then the minister shall ask the questions and the people shall repeat the answers.

Question: What is your Christian name?

Answer: My Christian name is _____.

After the repeating of each commandment by the people the minister shall say,

Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.(1)

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(1) Book of Common Prayer--pp. 283-289

This catechism is divided as follows:

1. Baptism

Baptism gives one a new status; the status of membership in Christ's Church.

Question: What is your name?

Answer: N. or M.

The child's own name is required as an answer--this marks him as an individual distinct from all others.

Question: Who gave you this name?

Answer: My Sponsors in Baptism: wherein I was made a member of Christ, the Child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven. (This gives him a definite relationship to God.)

Question: What did your Sponsors then do for you?

Answer: They did promise and vow three things in my name: First, that I should renounce the devil and all his works, the pomp and vanity of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh; Secondly, that I should believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith; and Thirdly, that I should keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of my life.

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2. The Creed

Question: Rehearse the articles of thy Belief.

Answer: Here the Apostle's Creed is recited.

Question: What dost thou chiefly learn in these articles of thy Belief?

Answer: First, I learn to believe in God the Father, who made me, and all the world.

Secondly, in God the Son, who hath redeemed me, and all mankind.

Thirdly, in God the Holy Ghost, who sanctifieth me, and all the people of God.

3. The Ten Commandments

Question: You said that your Sponsors did promise for you, that you should keep God's commandments. Tell me how many there are.

Answer: Ten.

Question: Which are they?

Answer: They are given in full.

4. The Lord's Prayer

The reasons given for teaching the Lord's Prayer are as follows:

1. To show the child his relation to God and his fellow men.
2. To pray that God's will may be done in the world and in ourselves.

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2. To pray that God's will may be done in the world and in ourselves.

3. To ask our Heavenly Father for our daily bread.

4. To ask for spiritual blessing.

5. To ask forgiveness.

Question: My good child, know this: that thou art not able to do these things of thyself, not to walk in the Commandments of God, and to serve Him, without His special grace; which thou must learn at all times to call for by diligent prayer. Let me hear, therefore, if thou canst say the Lord's Prayer.

Answer: Repeating of the Lord's Prayer.

5. The Sacraments--Baptism and the Lord's Supper

After making a study of the questions and answers in this section it seems that water is the outward visible sign of Baptism, and the inward sign is freedom from sin and a sign of regeneration. Repentance and Faith are the requirements of persons being baptized.

The outward sign of the Lord's Supper is Bread and Wine. The inward sign is the Body and Blood of Christ, spiritually taken and received. Examining oneself with the purpose of finding out how certain his desire is to repent and lead a new life; to have a faith in God's mercy through Christ; and to have charity toward all men are the things required of

those who come to the Lord's Supper.(1)

The following notation is made about the catechism in the Prayer Book:

> "So soon as children are come to a competent age, and can say the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, and can answer to the other questions of this short catechism, they shall be brought to the Bishop." (2)

The Holy Cross Press has published an interesting leaflet on "How to conduct the Catechism." The teacher of the catechism today feels that the child can be brought to an attitude of loving and reverent devotion to God as their Father, and a loyalty to Christ as their Redeemer in a more efficient way than is possible with much of the Sunday School material published today. Mr. Dupanloup says that the whole success of "The Catechism" depends upon patient and unwearied attention to details.(3)

The catechetical instruction is almost always given in a church or chapel in front of the altar. The arrangement for this instruction, according to Father Huntington, is very important. The boys on the Epistle side of the church

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(1) The Church Catechism of the Protestant Episcopal Church

(2) Book of Common Prayer--p. 576

(3) How to Conduct Catechism by Father Huntington O.H.C.--p. 5

and the girls on the Gospel side,with the younger children to the front. The children should not be crowded into the seat, but there should be plenty of space in between each one, and each line must be kept straight. The child is to be merited by a picture card or a seal, depending upon the section of the catechism he has memorized. Instead of telling the children to rise or kneel, they shall be guided by a signal. This signal may be a mallet or a bell. When the time for instruction has arrived the catechist shall wait until there is perfect silence, then he crosses himself (the children are taught to do it also) and says, "In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen." Then, "Lord have mercy upon us," the children reply, "Christ have mercy upon us." Then all present say the "Our Father." Then the following prayers are said by the catechist:

"O God, who art the Father of all the families of the earth, bless, we pray Thee, the children who come to this Catechism and give them loving hearts towards Thee and towards each other, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen."

"O Saviour of the world, who by Thy Cross and Precious Blood hast redeemed us, save us and help us, we humbly beseech Thee, O Lord." (1)

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(1) How to Conduct Catechism by Father Huntington O. H. C. --pp. 12-13

After the children have been given time to feel the silence, the signal is given for them to arise, and the first hymn is announced. The hymns are not used as a "time filler," but are chosen beforehand with special reference to the instruction for that day. A statement is made about each hymn before it is sung, as: "Now we are going to sing a hymn about our Lord being born and what He was as a boy." This hymn would be used with the instruction on the birth and childhood of Christ. After the hymn the catechizing begins.

The catechist should know the questions and answers by heart so that he can look at the children. A great deal of stress is placed on good marks and exactness in the memorization. After the new questions and answers are learned the instruction begins with the purpose of conveying information on subject matter already learned. This instruction should last about ten minutes. Sometimes before the next lesson the children are encouraged to write an abstract called a "diligent." At the end of a certain period the children who have been most diligent receive a prize. A boy twleve years old wrote this "diligent."

"We can always think of God the Father as the Maker of all things, of God the Son as our Saviour, who for us came to earth and redeemed us, and of God the Holy Ghost as the Spirit who comes into our hearts and gives us the Life of God at Baptism. When God the Son came to earth He took our

whole human nature. That is to say, He took the nature of both man and woman, and that of all five races. God the Son is just as much God, but He is also Man. Our Lord had no human father, but He had a human mother, whose name was Mary. Jesus worked in the workshop with Mary's husband. Our Lord's working shows what He thought about working." (1)

In the Admonitions children are instructed as to habits of devotions. First they are given the Rule for Prayer:

"Knees on the ground,
Eyes on the Cross,
Hearts in Heaven." (2)

The children are encouraged to keep this rule of prayer at home by having a cross on a table or wall in their sleeping room, and to make a cross to bring to the class before a certain day. Prizes are offered for the best crosses made. Bowing at the name of Jesus, reverencing the Altar as God's Throne, and making the Sign of the Cross, are other practices of devotion which are encouraged. Short prayers of dedication are taught, as:

"I praise my God this day;
I give myself to God this day;
I ask God to help me this day." (3)

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(1) How to Conduct Catechism by Father Huntington O.H.C.--p. 20

(2) How To Conduct Catechism by Father Huntington O.H.C.--p. 22

(3) How to Conduct Catechism by Father Huntington O.H.C.--p. 23

About an hour and a quarter is allowed for the whole session of The Catechism.

It is believed that by giving the child all this instruction he is storing away truths which will have meaning for him when he is old enough to understand it. This system may have its merits, but how much greater our opportunities are when we teach the child the things that have present meaning and come within his experience.

In the church school lesson material entitled "Christian Nurture Series" definite use is made of the Catechism. The purpose of Course 6, entitled "God's Great Family," is quoted as being two-fold:

1. It forms a climax of Christian helpfulness.
2. It accomplishes the word-for-word learning of the Catechism.

It is interesting to note the attempt made to correlate the catechism with illustrations from child life. The following is a brief outline from one of the lessons:

Negroes

Lesson 2

Aim: To teach the class what the church is doing for the negroes in Africa and how they may help.

Material Correlated

Informational

Lesson story

Picture: Julia C. Emery Hall

Memory Work

The Creed

Devotional Life

Daily reading of Prayer for Missions

Christian Service

Mission Work

The story is about a little African girl, Mhomo, the wrong things she believed, and how she learned to believe all that is true. To show how the catechism is correlated with illustrations from life one or two of the paragraphs will be quoted here:

".....When she thoroughly understood that God the loving Father was the Maker of all things, that He watched over her and cared for her, she lost her belief in evil spirits and witches, which she had learned in the 'Bush-school,' and could say with all her heart, 'I believe in God, the Father Almighty.'

".....After her Baptism, when she received the Christian name of Mary Margaret, she was confirmed by Bishop Ferguson, a colored Bishop, who was for many years head of the church in Liberia."

Expressional Work

Teaching of the Creed

Home Work

Answers to these questions are to be written on the Leaflet. Do you know:

1. How Mhomo was rescued?
2. Where she was taken?
3. What hymn she liked to sing?
4. What Bishop confirmed her?
5. How many articles or sentences there are in the Creed? (1)

It is very evident that catechetical material was not to be a neglected factor in the child's training. It is plainly seen also that the writers of this material felt it necessary to make the catechism more understandable to the child.

d. The Catechism of the Methodist Episcopal Church. In many of the Methodist churches the catechism is still used in both communions. This preface is found in the Junior Catechism:

> "By direction of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, commissions were appointed by the Bishops of the two churches to prepare new catechisms for use in both communions.

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(1) Christian Nurture Series, Course 6--God's Great Family, 1919--pp. 73-79

"The aim has been to cover the range of essential doctrine: to give a large view of the life of our Lord; to guide the children to a personal religious experience; and to enforce the practical duties of daily conduct. This Catechism has been approved and commended by the Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church and of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South." (1)

It is divided into the following sections:

I. God

Q. 3. Where is God?

A. God is everywhere.

(Scripture proof--Jer. 23:24 and Psalms 139:7-10)

II. Man

Q. 13. Who were our first parents?

A. Adam and Eve were our first parents.

(Scripture--Gen. 3:20 and Acts 17:26)

III. Jesus Christ

Q. 22. What did God do to save fallen man?

A. God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

(John 3:16)

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(1) The Junior Catechism of the Methodist Episcopal Church and Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1929

IV. Holy Spirit

Q. 71. What is the Holy Spirit?

A. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, the divine Helper whom Jesus promised His disciples before He left the world.

(John 15:26)

V. The Means of Grace

Q. 76. What means are used by the Holy Spirit to aid us in living a Christian life?

A. He uses the Word of God and prayer, the Church of Christ, and the Sacraments.

VI. Duties to God and Man

The Commandments and the "Golden Rule" make up this section.

VII. Directions for the Christian Life

Q. 109. How may we begin the Christian life?

A. By listening to the voice of God, repenting of our sins, and trusting Jesus as our Saviour.

(Scripture--Acts 16:30, 31)

Appendix

1. Beautitudes
2. Ten Commandments
3. Apostle's Creed
4. Baptismal Covenant
5. Prayers(1)

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(1) The Junior Catechism of the Methodist Episcopal Church and Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1929

This is just another example of a catechism "true to form," composed of abstract doctrines and beliefs. Its concepts are far removed from the life problems of a child.

e. The Catechism of the Catholic Church. In all Catholic churches today the catechism is an important part of the curriculum. Religion is made the foundation of all their instruction. Along with the catechism are taught Bible History, Church History, and Liturgy. The very young children are given only a few lessons in the catechism, but are taught prayers, the Apostle's Creed, and told Bible stories. Even the smallest child is taught how to cross himself and take the holy water.

The children from seven to nine years are in the confession class. During this period the horror of sin is impressed very deeply upon the child. Example:

Q. What is hell?

A. Hell is a terrible place where all the bad are punished forever.

Q. What is sin?

A. Sin is disobedience to God.

Q. How is sin divided?

A. Sin is divided into venial and mortal.

The communion class follows the confession class. Additional portions of the catechism are learned, the creed is mastered, the Sacraments are explained, hymns learned, and

liturgy taught.

The aim of the confirmation class which follows is to inspire faith in the Holy Ghost. Children from eleven to twelve make a study of:

1. Catechism lessons on the Holy Ghost
2. Catholic faith and belief.

During this time the church teaches that only within her walls can salvation be found.

The last class is called the perseverance class, which covers a two-year course--

1. A study of the Old and New Testaments
2. A study of the history and devotional life of the church.(1)

The fear element rather than the love element is the chief emphasis in this catechism. The child is taught to think of God as One who will bring punishment upon him for his many "sins," and not as One who cares for him and loves him.

f. Summary. Speaking generally, most Sunday School material today does not make any reference to the catechism. The progressive Sunday School leader has come to realize that such concepts as regeneration, repentance, and the nature of

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(1) The Curriculum of Religious Education by George Herbert Betts--pp. 518-521

the Trinity do not come within the child's experience. He feels, too, that the catechism places too much emphasis on fact and content without stopping to consider the effect it will have on religious concepts or moral conduct; also that it teaches too much that must be unlearned.

Joseph Priestly defends the catechism and its method by saying that it leads to ease and freedom of conversation; it engages the attention of the child; and when made to repeat things themselves they will more naturally question the instructor. Even though they do not understand all they are learning, an imperfect knowledge is better than none at all. "For my own part," he said, "I think I have the greatest reason to be thankful to God for the happiness of religious education though I was taught many things I never understood, and even many that I do not believe." (1)

The progressive religious educator does not feel that education consists in merely storing away information, but that it makes provisions for carrying out the activities and conduct which result in spiritual growth and development. He believes that material shall be a means to an end, and not an end in itself. Attention is centered upon the living child and not upon the subject matter. "The materials are

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(1) A Catechism for Children and Young Persons by Joseph Priestly--Preface

selected with reference to their power to awaken, nourish, and guide in this living development and growth. No body of materials, not even the Bible itself, comes first, the child comes first. Jesus came, not that we might have the Bible, or the catechism, but that we might have abundant life." (1) The theology taught by Jesus was a practical theology. He did not confine himself to instruction, but believed in sharing experience. He knew the kingdom of heaven on earth would not come by dogmatic teaching, but by sharing His life with those with whom he came in contact. He taught them religion in much the same way He would teach anything else, as a vital part of human experience.

In conclusion may we say that Christian education at one time consisted in handing down dogmas from one generation to another. The catechism used for this purpose was formal, dry and lifeless, and too much a collection of words. Christian education today is one of interest with sympathy for childhood, a knowledge of the child, of the child mind, and of the child's interests and abilities.

The church has not always been conscious of the great importance of the proper curriculum for its children. The early Sunday School offered the catechism with little thought

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(1) The Curriculum of Religious Education by George Herbert Betts--p. 247

of questioning its effectiveness. Later attention was turned to the doctrine of personal conversion, and still later the Bible was considered as the center of instruction. The progressive educator today says use only that material which fits the developing mind of the learner. The new slogan is "The Child at the Center."

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